

Leadership and Academic Culture in the Senate Presidency

An Interpretive View

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This article utilizes current interview data from 42 senate presidents to analyze patterns of leadership orientations. The language and symbols that faculty leaders use reflects their beliefs and behaviors about shared governance. Three themes that arose from the interviews are discussed. References to citizenship, skepticism about faculty governance, and a desire for personal career gain were dominant themes. The study suggests that the various dimensions of academic culture influence leadership and that thinking of shared governance through a cultural lens rather than a bureaucratic or political standpoint enhances our understanding about how to improve shared governance.

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The glue that binds a leader to his or her followers in an organization is the shared meaning developed from an organization's culture. As leaders of the faculty, presidents of academic senates are center points of meaning making for the faculty they represent in at least two manners.

First, an institution's faculty define what the senate presidency represents, as opposed to what the president does. Observers of organizational dynamics sometimes depict this first view as "it's the position, not the personality." As such, the position means something to organizational members regardless of who is in office. Accordingly, the institution's president or chief executive officer (CEO) might lead the senate in spite of the lukewarm reception faculty often give nonfaculty, administrative leadership in faculty governance.

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Second, actions and behaviors of the president make meaning in the institution. A faculty senate president who meets informally with the provost but fails to respond to a senator's e-mails sends a message, whether intended or not. Just as a college president highlights who is important by attending home football games with the alumni but not finding the time to meet with the faculty, a senate president who never meets with the administration sends one signal, whereas someone who gives preeminence to the administration sends another. The point is not that one signal is wrong and another is correct; rather, in a cultural milieu, all actions have symbolic significance.

These two views reflect two sides of a controversy about the relationship between organizational culture and leadership. Bolman and Deal (1997) ask, "Do leaders shape culture, or are they shaped by it?" (p. 231). Both perspectives are useful for understanding the senate presidency, rather than the notion of one being more appropriate than the other. The actions of a president include the words he or she employs. Words communicate messages; organizational members interpret those words and give those words meaning. Taken in context, a statement of "tenure is dead" by a senate leader will have a different meaning for many members across the institution. An institution with a history of electing only senior, veteran faculty to the senate presidency indicates one form of meaning making because those in the institution understand seniority matters.

Scholars of higher education suggest that reform in decision-making structures is important for the health of higher education institutions in the 21st century (Collis, 2001; Frank, 2000). The extent to which faculty participate in governance shapes the kind of academic leadership involved in decision making. A cultural interpretation of academic leaders who engage in contemporary decision-making processes becomes useful in understanding governance.

Faculty work has served as a basis on which academic professionals have developed language to communicate values and express how they feel about the world in which they work. Academic professionals have coined language that many in and out of the academy associate with faculty work. David Damrosch (1995), for example, in his book about modern American faculty culture, describes faculty as "jet-setting entrepreneurs" and "absent-minded professors" (p. 78). The entrepreneur suggests a highly competent consultant who carries his or her scholarship off campus to clients worldwide. In contrast, an absentminded professor suggests a faculty member who works poorly beyond the safe confines of the controlled laboratory-like conditions of the ivory tower on campus. Just as professors such as Damrosch use language to reflect views embedded in faculty culture, academic leaders represent faculty work in their choice of language.

What I intend to do here is delineate ways that senate presidents construct meaning for themselves as senate presidents. Different leadership orientations emerged from the interviews I had with Senate presidents. One president described his role, for example, as "my civic responsibility," but another lamented that the presidency was "my turn in the gun barrel." And a third interviewee frankly said, "Honestly, it's [the senate presidency] good for my vita."

My objective is to examine the role of academic culture in faculty leadership at research universities and, in doing so, to develop a cultural interpretation of faculty leadership as defined by the senate presidency.

Based on data from telephone surveys with 42 senate presidents, I offer three ideal types to interpret leadership in the faculty senate presidency. They are approximate sketches from which to pattern leadership orientations in the senate presidency. Working from a cultural perspective, I examine an aspect of leadership that has received little attention—the senate presidency.

In what follows, I define organizational culture as it relates to the context in which senate presidents operate. I explain leadership from a cultural perspective, the aim of which is to bring focus to the role of the senate president explained in the following subsection. Following a review of my research method, presentation and analysis of the data follow in the fourth section. In the final sections, I offer what implications the study offers to understanding the senate presidency.

CULTURE AND LEADERSHIP

Organizational culture. Culture is a combination of product and process in the organization (Bolman & Deal, 1997). A key process in organizational culture is faculty work—research, teaching, and service. All three cultural products, or “the way we do things around here,” as Deal and Kennedy (1982, p. 4) have defined culture, are manifestations of embedded values. Clark (1987) proposed that four subsystems of culture exist for faculty in colleges and universities: a national culture, a professional culture, a disciplinary culture, and an institutional culture. The institutional culture of the faculty helps define what a professor is to do with regard to one’s research, teaching, and service. To be sure, an English professor acts differently from an engineering professor, but the campus on which they teach and do their research affords them some similarities.

The organizational structure is a cultural product and provides the framework around which members of the institution act. The decentralized organization, the multiple academic departments, the administrative units, and the physical plant comprise the stage on which the actors perform. Bolman and Deal (1997) have characterized the institutionalized components in a theatric metaphor as an “ongoing drama that entertains, creates meaning, and portrays the organization itself” (p. 237).

A key cultural process is how faculty become socialized. In collegial relations, faculty interact and influence each other through continuous personal exchanges sometimes based on social attraction and reciprocity (Birnbaum, 1989). Faculty of an academic department housed in a single building might engage in collegial relations because of their physical proximity to one another. In contrast to collegial relations, a lack of social integration results in isolation and disconnection from colleagues in and out of the home department (Dill,

1982). Obviously, there are wide variations that exist from department to department and from one to another institution. The key point here is that socialization occurs and takes place by way of the sociohistorical forces of the institution and department and the meaning making of the individuals involved.

Leadership from a cultural perspective. A cultural perspective of leadership is concerned with those products and processes to which leaders bring attention. Two approaches for understanding leadership relate to a cultural perspective. First, followers of the leader ascribe meaning to the leadership role. Analysts of leadership have introduced attribution theory into the study of higher education leaders (Bass, 1981; Birnbaum, 1989). Attribution theory "amounts to what might be considered faith in the potential . . . of people identified as leaders" (p. 25). Organizational members create leadership roles with the hope of attributing desired outcomes to the leader (Birnbaum, 1989; Pfeffer, 1977).

The extent to which an individual exercises leadership is limited by the amount of faith faculty place in an administrative leader. Consider an example of how a leader relates to cultural processes common to postsecondary education. Campus CEOs have experienced administrative censure and votes of no confidence after failing to solicit faculty opinion on important decisions. The assumption in many campus cultures is that faculty deserve consultation regardless of how much or how little they understand of debatable issues. At the same time, on other campuses at other times the same kinds of actions by a leader will elicit no discernable protest from a faculty. The culture of the campus is in part the reason why faculty act differently from institution to institution.

The second view of leadership is one in which the leader manages culture by way of deliberate acts. Analysts have termed the study of the leader's actions "transactional leadership" (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978). Others have suggested that leaders develop and sustain the institutional culture with identifiable actions (Dill, 1982). As such, followers of the leader gain clearer insight into what is important by watching the actions of the leader. A hypothetical scenario illustrates how academic leaders manage culture. Just before the school year begins, the department chair finds no faculty available to teach a core course. Knowing senior-tenured faculty might vigorously contest teaching on short notice, the chair asks a recently hired assistant professor to shoulder the heavier teaching load. Some explain the decision as the less experienced faculty "earning their stripes" much the same way other faculty in the department did. The act maintains the status quo and all actors observe how transmission of cultural values gets sustained.

The senate president as cultural leader. Senate presidents underscore at least three attitudes faculty hold with regard to participation in academic governance by the professorate. The attitudes are culturally based and emphasize the domains of teaching, research, and service. An important assumption behind the

notion that a senate president is a cultural leader maintains that the role builds on already-existing shared meanings within the academy.

First, the primary role in running the institution should be with someone who temporarily vacates a faculty position only to later return to the post after discharging civic duties (Burgan, 1998). The temporary nature of appointment to the leader's role is less significant than the motivation for doing so. It is an ethical obligation one holds within the profession in service beyond one's department, much the way doctors swear to the Hippocratic oath. As a result, duty guides actions and faculty serve fellow academic citizens of the academic community.

Second, an underlying and persistent sense of nonprofessionalism characterizes the senate leaders. Regardless of the competency a president formerly showed in the department faculty role, the ability to succeed as the senate president is limited by the notion that administrative savvy is lacking. In comparison to the highly trained technical and administrative staffs at the research university, the senate president is a part-timer playing a game with professional technocrats. Some faculty have asserted that even the best senate presidents are mere part-time amateurs and the senate presidency is a misconstrued representation of true faculty leadership (Trow, 1990).

The third perspective stems from the idea that faculty loyalty is strongest with outer reference groups, not the employing institution or to the governance enterprise (Gouldner, 1957). These "cosmopolitan" faculty value their stature and independent posture for personal professional gain. A strong preference for disciplinary recognition, publishing, and acceptance with professional association networks overshadows the desire to participate in institutional governance within this perspective.

A senate president who embodies citizenship focuses on advancing the ethos of democratic involvement by faculty on campus. As such, the president spends time on recruiting more faculty to the senate. The president spends many hours on the telephone with key faculty across the university encouraging them to get involved to create a more self-governed organization for faculty welfare. The part-time president maintains the status quo. Such a president avoids engaging in any activity that changes the balance of administration-faculty power in decision making. Finally, the cosmopolitan president pursues activity that reinforces reward for professional scholarship. One example is when the president challenges administrative policies that favor the procurement of funding for one kind of research over others (Brown, 1991). Capricious favoritism violates a core faculty belief that knowledge is valuable, even knowledge acquired from unsponsored research.

Obviously, what I have outlined are ideal types. Most individuals embody a mixture of types, but for my purposes here it is instructive to consider what motivates someone to become a senate president and how their actions play into the making of an organization's culture.

METHOD

I acquired data collected through semistructured telephone surveys with 42 faculty senate presidents at 42 institutions between March 15 and April 15, 2002. All of the institutions are categorized as research extensive by the Carnegie classification system. Institutions were randomly selected from this category of schools.

Data for the article came from the responses to an open-ended analytical question, "There are often personal and/or professional reasons explaining why individuals choose to lead the faculty senate. Please explain your reasons." I reviewed transcripts of responses, looking especially for comments that were relevant to the question, and developed categories that arose out of the data. I then sorted the data into three main themes: citizen, skeptic, and careerist. The first question provided the organizing filter through which I obtained data on the president as cultural leader.

One limitation of the study was that the data are figures of quoted speech that showed what presidents said about their view of the presidency in their context. I am, obviously, working from a speaker's perception of his or her world rather than on the analysis of that world. Again, my point here is to come to terms with how one group of actors sees the culture of their organization and how they fit within it.

FRAMES OF REFERENCE OF SENATE PRESIDENTS

The citizen. I found in the data several presidents who used language emblematic of citizenship. In some instances, senate presidents invoked imagery with their language commonly associated with social democracy and politics. One president indicated that his "only motivation was a belief in democracy." In related but distinguishable ways, presidents mentioned citizenship. "It's my civic responsibility at my age to carry the [faculty] message to the administration." Another president mentioned the presidency as the "civic responsibility for faculty to get involved."

Some presidents described their citizenship in relation to a larger community. Two presidents mentioned, "I'm interested in knowing what's going on, how the university is run," and finding a way to "serve a full role in the university" as indicators of their membership to a larger community of scholars in the institution. Two other presidents mentioned involvement in "important campuswide issues" and at "university level" to describe how they conceive their leadership role as citizens. Another president said more pointedly, "My work as department chair made me want to learn more." The word choices of these individual leaders suggested that they valued involvement in faculty governance beyond the department level and at the larger university level.

In three instances, presidents used normative language to describe their leadership role as an inherent component of their faculty identity. One president said it was his way to "make a professional contribution," and another called it his "professional duty." A third related that he served in his role following a "feeling of obligation."

Some presidents looked to the confidence their peers placed in them to lead. These presidents described a confidence they had in such endorsement. "I've been involved [in governance] for every year and my colleagues seem to think [something] about that," responded one president. Another described a more unusual but related circumstance: "I was senate chair elect [when] our president died . . . and after the presidential search . . . I felt since I was chair elect it would be good for me to stay and continue as chair to provide continuity."

In summary, presidents sometimes described citizenship vividly with their word choice, including mention of "civic responsibility" and "democracy." An underlying sense of collegiality appears in the citizen president. Acceptance by other faculty professionals was a reference point mentioned. Sometimes, presidents represented their leadership role using peer acceptance as a reference point.

The skeptic. As mentioned in the sketches above, skeptics were hesitant to engage in a new activity and did not do so until they believed they had sufficient knowledge to pursue it. A lack of training for specialized work sometimes explained why a skeptic questioned his or her own ability to perform a role. At least one quarter of all respondents fell into this category, with a few subthemes found in this category.

Two presidents responded along the first subtheme and described extrinsic factors in the governance system that accounted for their leadership. "It's [mandatory and] in the university charter for me to do this," flatly remarked one president, suggesting an obligation to serve the role. Such an obligation differed from the citizens because citizen obligation was intrinsically oriented, whereas skeptic obligation was extrinsically oriented. Another president responded, "I was pushed into it . . . [after] I served on the executive board." He also stated that others on his campus accordingly dubbed him the "reluctant president." Such views from leaders reflected the kinds of images leaders developed for themselves as a result of flawed selection processes that staff them to positions involuntarily.

In the second subtheme, comments from respondents revealed an overall lack of importance attributed to the position. Some had not even considered the leadership role, suggesting the lack of importance they attribute to senate leadership. "I didn't think much about [being president] . . . the previous president handpicked me. She asked if I wanted to do it, and I said yes." Another related, "I didn't want to be president . . . [but] I was chair of the policy committee for 9 years . . . [and from that] they usually pick someone."

A third subtheme showed comments about reciprocity. The point here was that such leaders viewed their role not as an expression of their capabilities but as

the result of other circumstances of personal importance and not a preexisting interest in faculty governance. "[This university] has been good to me and this is my payback to the university," said one respondent. "People I respected asked me to do it [be president] . . . and I got involved," said another. Perhaps other reasons and circumstances explained how these two individuals went on to serve their roles, but both of these comments suggested a tit-for-tat agreement that these two individuals perceived. What these leaders did not cite is how their own capacity to lead brought them to senate presidency. Omission of such language here told as much as what they did cite.

Others indeed tried to avoid the presidency, as seen in more pointed comments. "[I'm president] because everybody took two steps back and I only took one," quipped one president. Another lamented, "I didn't have enough sense to stand back when they were asking for volunteers," whereas another said, "I was nominated for the position when I missed a meeting." Why an individual would go on to be a president was evident in later comments, such as, "if you don't get involved, you can't complain" and "taking one's turn in the barrel," as mentioned earlier.

Respondents reported disappointment in the role, citing that the job turned out to be different from what they expected. One president reflected after his time in the post, "I guess we all think that we could do it better than someone else" and he went on to explain his doubts about his efficacy in doing so. Another pointed out, "In a way I didn't think I'd be doing all this, but I thought I could contribute." Here again was an expressed concern about the ability to function as a leader.

In summary, distinguishable aspects emerged from a group of presidents who overall committed themselves to the presidency but described a less-than-enthusiastic view of their role. The impetus for entering the presidency came from external sources for two presidents who described institutional charters and customary practice as their route into the presidency. The points in time at which respondents developed a skeptical view of the role differed. For some, this view came early, particularly for those who stated they did not desire the presidency; others reflected doubtful views on how their role failed to meet their expectations later, after taking the position.

The careerist. The careerist revealed the belief that his or her distinguished abilities in their discipline gave them the credentials to lead the senate. They may have indicated that they had other skills that qualified them for their role as leader, but of primary importance was some characteristic symbolic of the cosmopolitan archetype. The cosmopolitan took a careerist approach to the leadership role and pursued personal advancement as a primary concern. This advancement started in the discipline with recognition and esteem coming from colleagues outside the institution. In turn, the leader may have used personal prestige as capital to advance some area of the individual's career at the institution.

Some presidents cited exceptional or special qualifications they had as the reason for leading the senate. Each of these abilities was a representation of their disciplinary expertise. For example, one president said, "I teach parliamentary procedure, so I knew I could do it." Two other presidents said, "I am a political scientist, so I offer what I know" and "my Ph.D. is in political science." These were not the only presidents to mention their disciplinary affiliation. Comments from another president further exemplified the connection between the academic discipline and the presidency. This president said, "I was chairperson [of a senate committee] for a while and wanted to do something different . . . [given] I am an historian and my idea of governance is participatory." Three other presidents identified themselves as doctors of medicine and their home schools of medicine. What became clearer was the emphasis in applicability of the political science, government, and history disciplines presidents cited.

Sometimes the reputation of cosmopolitan faculty preceded them. One president related that he had served as department chair in two departments, his home department and another one outside of his discipline. In both instances, he successfully managed to turn both units around financially and earned the esteem of administration and faculty for his work. Ultimately, he gained enough of a reputation at the university level to earn a nomination and election to the senate presidency. He summarized his track record as "personal talent in the area [of leadership]."

Three presidents provided responses symbolizing a careerist orientation to their leadership role. These responses were characterized by the explicit use of the word *leader* or *leadership* and were colored by statements desiring advancement of some sort. One president explained how he desired to break into the "good old boy network at the university level" by gaining a "leadership position" he perceived in the senate presidency. Another president described the presidency as a training ground for future administrative work. "I saw it as a way to get involved in university matters overall . . . to learn and exercise skills [to] go into university administration." This same respondent expanded the image of careerist to a more common-used, vocational orientation. She continued, "I couldn't refuse the opportunity. . . . I saw it as a calling." A president previously cited related frankly, "It was a wonderful way to get exposed to key power, influence, and authority . . . [and] it's good for my vita in the future." Careerism took on an additional nuance with another president who described the president as a "career thing" but added he had not been as creative or productive in his scholarship. His experience as a senate president, then, he pursued to offset deficiencies he perceived in other areas of his faculty work.

In summary, careerists related distinguishable orientations such as a careerism and disciplinary prowess in their role as senate leader. The extent to which such orientations shaped their leadership roles originated from different sources. For some presidents, they drew on experience in teaching material associated with service work in faculty governance, such as parliamentary procedure. Other presidents drew on past track records in academic administrative

TABLE 1: Leadership Types in the Faculty Senate Presidency: Selected Quotes

Citizen	"It's my civic responsibility. At my age we need someone to carry the message to the administration. When you're young you do research."
	"I felt a feeling of obligation to do it knowing it's difficult to get investment [in faculty governance]."
	"I'd always seen myself in the past a teacher-researcher. But I got involved rather than be in the lab, the classic ivory tower."
	"I want to make sure shared governance was taking place . . . [in any] decision concerning academic matters, the faculty were consulted. I want to make sure our rights . . . [to] academic freedom and tenure . . . are protected."
Skeptic	"I was pushed into it and have actually been dubbed the 'reluctant president.' "
	"I got asked to do it, but I did not seek out the position. They promised me that it would be over quickly."
	"I was nominated for [president] when I missed a committee meeting. There's a sense here that it's my turn in the [gun] barrel."
Careerist	"I didn't have enough sense to stand back when they were asking for volunteers."
	"I've had a personal interest in leadership positions and had been on a number of important committees in the past."
	"I wanted to learn and exercise leadership skills. Ultimately I hope to go into higher education administration."
	"I heard it was a wonderful way to get exposure to key people with power, influence, and authority. Honestly, it's also good for my vita."
	"I realize that I hadn't got much of a feel of what the university was about . . . when I came here I had a chance to make a new start, put [my academic] department on the map."

roles as department chairs. Such views of the senate presidency differed from other presidents who focused more on their lack of relevant leadership experience (skeptics) or on norm-based concepts of what faculty should do (citizens) (see Table 1).

DISCUSSION

Multiframe leadership. The foregoing findings portray the multiple frames with which to view senate leadership. The idea of a frame enables leaders to give greater attention to some aspects of organizational behaviors over others. Scholars have adopted the multiframe idea in the study of academic leadership at the CEO level (Bensimon, 1989; Birnbaum, 1989). Bensimon (1989) states, "Leaders who incorporate elements or several frames are likely to have more flexible responses to different administrative tasks because they have different images of the organization and can interpret events in a variety of ways" (p. 423). Given the complexity of issues presidents confront, it is beneficial to define senate president leadership in multiple frames, as described in the sketch that follows.

A citizen leadership frame views organizational life with a concern for the institutional culture. The senate leader seeks collaborative decision making using a human resources approach and emphasizes the use of interpersonal skills. The image of a town-hall leader illustrates this leadership frame, a style that is collegial and relational. The citizen approach to leadership highlights the *par e paribus* (Birnbaum, 1989), or first among equals, idea by consulting with faculty consistently through informal dialog. The aim is to become the voice of the faculty for the citizen president.

A skeptical frame embodies elements of Theory X (McGregor, 1960), a luke-warm approach characterized by attempts to get faculty to conform to apathetic and indifferent expectations for governance. This leadership approach emphasizes activities that are noninvasive to faculty scholarship. As a result, faculty invest little time or energy; little value gets associated with governance activities endorsed by the senate leaders.

A careerist frame recognizes the scarcity of resources in the organization. The senate president in this frame builds alliances with key individuals to leverage power, including access to resources, such as face-time with senior administrators and invitations to important meetings. The control the president has over setting the agendas and nominating new faculty to key subcommittee positions are examples of bargaining chips this kind of leader emphasizes. One objective of the careerist is to develop administrative skills during the presidency that add value to their candidacy for subsequent administrative positions.

Across these three frames is the commonly held assumption that the leader assigns meaning to the products and processes of the setting. In turn, others in the setting make meaning of leader actions. For example, some ex-presidents go on to become faculty patriarchs or matriarchs after advocating for the faculty during their presidency. Some return to their faculty posts without ceremony and leave little of historical significance. A few earn the spotlight after the presidency and serve on high-profile, big-decision committees (Schuster, Smith, Corak, & Yamada, 1994) or task forces or leave the institution for higher, senior administrative appointments. The frames bring focus to the actions, and those in the organization begin to make meaning based on what place the leader takes in a specific context.

Effective cultural leadership. It is helpful to focus on select cultural shifts in changes to the academic profession given the orientation of this investigation. Such shifts in the academic profession are relevant to an analysis of faculty leaders in the 21st century. These cultural shifts include but are not limited to changes in technology and demography. A discussion of how faculty leaders foster faculty participation in governance amid these shifts relates to the effectiveness of faculty leaders.

The emergence of technology in the current digital age gives faculty leaders access to information with ease previously unseen. The Internet and e-mail are resources now commonly used by faculty, and these resources were not

proliferating a generation ago. Researchers have drawn on technology to inform decision making using information and feedback from Web-based faculty surveys (Tierney & Minor, 2002). Arguably, senate presidents are faced with access to the voices of faculty in innovative ways.

Technology offers the ability to communicate with faculty in innovative ways, but it is the meaning that senate leaders ascribe to technology that signifies how information gets used to communicate within an institution. The point is not to argue that senate presidents are effective if they develop a new senate Web site or publish the senate minutes through an e-newsletter. Instead, I have drawn on the three sketches of faculty leadership to suggest multiple ways leaders talk about the use of technology in faculty communication. In turn, faculty talk shapes how they think about their participation in governance in a particular institution. The extent to which technology, leadership, and culture coalesce offers new possibilities for faculty participation in governance.

Researchers continue to document changes in the demographic profile of the American professorate, including the age, gender, and racial makeup of the faculty (Turner & Meyers, 2000; U.S. Department of Education, 1999). Indeed, a senate leader cannot focus on change so distant from the home institution that matters in the immediate setting become overlooked. Change in the aggregate to the profession does not translate equally to changes in the faculty on every campus; some universities achieve racial diversity if the faculty ranks more successfully than others. Yet, as Burton Clark (1987) mentioned, faculty culture is a convergence of the national and institutional cultures. What becomes relevant is to understand how leaders manage governance practices with an emphasis on the state of faculty demography. The inclusion or exclusion of younger, female, and non-White faculty shapes the faculty culture, particularly when a senate president nominates committee chairs or makes appointments to governance committees.

Further research in leadership. Although this investigation provides a brief view into conditions that led to the entry of faculty to the senate presidency, further study of how senate leaders behave in the organization is needed. Qualitative studies are particularly germane because faculty interpret processes and activities in unique ways and develop meanings specific to the institution in which they work. Stated differently, what faculty believe in one institution differs from what faculty at other institutions believe. One result is that generalizing about leadership across settings is problematic without a detailed understanding of the contexts in question.

Given the limitations found in the study of senate leadership across institutions, an alternative view seeks to learn more about the leader and the leader's role in context. Although it would be a mistake to generalize about faculty leadership based on findings from a single study, other studies have indirectly addressed senate leadership through the role of history and culture (Lee, 1991) and senate leadership in the termination of academic programs (Eckel, 1999).

These studies feature the case study design in qualitative research methods. Case studies of the senate leaders are useful because they identify the products and processes central to their work. In this vein, investigators begin to understand more about the leader by way of “thicker” analysis. The case study offers a holistic view of the context and the relationship between the leader and individuals and issues found in the setting.

This study focused on one dimension of senate leaders across many institutions. More remains for investigation of individual campuses and the senate leaders at those campuses. Because of the problem-based nature of research in postsecondary education, a number of theoretical lenses are relevant to the field of study, including those from organizational behavior, psychology, and sociology. Research designs that use inductive approaches to understand leadership permit researchers to approach little-studied phenomena with “open eyes” and to be sensitive to new perspectives on leadership.

CONCLUSION

Senate presidents base the ways in which they construct meaning for themselves on shared interpretations of academic life and culture. Where one would expect the presidency to be something to which faculty aspire, at least one leadership type challenged this assumption. Results suggest that a mixture of leadership types capture the diversity of cultural contexts and settings in which leaders operate. These types in turn provide a unifying lens from which to understand leadership effectiveness within and across different institutional cultures. Study of faculty leadership is a starting point from which to understand the impact of how internal organizational culture contributes to how institutions select leaders for governance in an era characterized by significant external environmental change. According to many, “faculty are the heart of the university.” The senate presidency remains a focal point for this key community, and it is important to understand how the senate presidency functions in leading the university.

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